# ALCOHOLISM
AND
# DRUG ADDICTION

THE following abstracts from published medical literature show the conclusions reached by various investigators on the potentialities of 'Benzedrine' Brand Tablets in alcoholism and drug addiction.

## The Treatment of Alcoholic Psychoses with Benzedrine Sulfate

*J.A.M.A.*, 110 : 1811, May 28, 1938

As alcohol is admittedly a depressant, the authors thought it logical to treat alcoholic cases with 'Benzedrine' Tablets since their stimulating effect on the central nervous system is firmly established.* A series of 28 patients with psychoses due to alcoholic intoxication were treated with doses of 10—30 mg. daily. A definite and at times marked acceleration of improvement occurred in 93%.

> "In general it may be said that mild states of depression following drinking debauches respond in an exceedingly striking manner to benzedrine sulfate. Doses of from 10 to 20 mg. of the drug given by mouth in the morning will often produce marked improvement within twenty-four hours. Several persons with alcoholic stupor were aroused within thirty minutes after the injection of from 10 to 30 mg. of benzedrine sulfate intravenously. As is to be expected, those with pathologic intoxication reacted very favourably to the drug. In cases of delirium tremens and of early acute hallucinosis the response was also satisfactory. In cases of chronic hallucinosis and of Korsakoff's psychosis the results were not as gratifying. Benzedrine sulfate appeared to be of most value in the treatment of alcoholic psychosis of recent onset in which organic defects of the sensorium, deterioration or personality alterations had not developed.
>
> "In states of intoxication with alcohol in which no psychosis was demonstrable, benzedrine sulfate usually produced an even more satisfactory response than in states of intoxication in which a psychosis existed. The headache, fatigue, languor and mental retardation which are characteristic of a 'hang-over' usually disappeared within an hour or so after a morning dose of from 5 to 10 mg. . . . We suggest that benzedrine sulfate may produce these beneficial responses in alcoholic states through its action of stimulating the central and the sympathetic nervous system and also directly by neutralizing or antagonizing the alcohol itself."

*Experimental work on the action of 'Benzedrine' on brain metabolism suggests that the compound owes its stimulating influence to its ability to inhibit the formation of toxins that cause fatigue (*Biochemical Journal*, 1940, March, 34 : 414).

The authors believe that the use of 'Benzedrine' Tablets in states of alcoholism with or without psychoses should be limited to patients in institutions.* In this way any dangers of addiction to 'Benzedrine' itself and of harm from unpredictable untoward effects can be adequately safeguarded.

## Treatment of Chronic Alcoholism with Amphetamine (Benzedrine) Sulfate

*New Eng. Jour. Med.*, 220 : 129, Jan. 26, 1939

The author gives full details of 21 cases of chronic alcoholism treated with 'Benzedrine' Tablets. The use of this drug was instituted because the author had noted the lift produced by it was extremely effective in relieving 'hang-over' on the morning following excessive indulgence in alcohol, and because, taken beforehand, amphetamine sulphate appeared to increase the ability to consume alcohol without intoxication. An additional basis for this study was the fact that the tablets had been used successfully to arouse patients from drug comas due to the barbiturates and the opiates.

Twenty-one ambulatory alcoholic patients were instructed to take 20 mg. of amphetamine sulphate daily, 10 mg. on arising and 10 mg. at noon. This dosage was increased in several cases and decreased in one. Several patients were told to take an additional 10 mg. in the late afternoon whenever they expected to be out in the evening at a place where drinking would be going on. Patients were not asked to avoid parties or to modify their usual way of living. An attempt was made to avoid all formal psychotherapy.

Insomnia occurred infrequently; and was transient. There was no marked loss in weight, no increased nervousness, no loss of appetite, no rise in blood-pressure, nor any other disturbing effect from the medication. The author states :—

> "There has been no evidence whatsoever of addiction or habit formation. Several patients spontaneously suggested omitting the tablets, and a few actually did so without being told. None have given any sign, consciously or unconsciously, of a need to continue the drug, such as would be present if a habit had been formed or a true addiction had occurred."

Of the 21 cases treated, 8 had, at the date of this report, completely abstained from alcohol since beginning treatment. These periods of abstinence varied from two weeks to thirteen months, and were more than four months in 6 cases. In an additional 6 cases of the series, results could be considered successful in that the drinking habits of the patients were so modified that they were able to resume their places in the family and in business, even though they suffered one or two relapses from total abstinence. In only 4 cases was there total failure, and even in 3 of these there was a short period of abstinence.

Evaluating the results in another way, 15 of the 21 cases abstained for a period that was at least six times as long as the usual period of abstinence before treatment. Of the remaining 6 cases, 3 stayed completely abstinent, but at the date of this report had not been under treatment for as long as six times the longest pre-treatment free interval.

Most patients whose treatment was classified as successful reported that they felt alert, energetic, and able to do their work and to face their difficulties. They felt that they no longer needed the support of alcohol and consequently had no temptation to drink.

---

*Some observers consider this limitation unnecessary (*see, e.g.*, p. 3), and in certain types of alcoholism treated with 'Benzedrine' Brand Tablets it is certainly possible to avoid 'hospitalization' —"that insidious adaptation of the individual to an idle and abnormal existence at the very time when he is undergoing treatment for a failure to adapt to greater demands."

22500895261

The author suggests that 'Benzedrine' Tablets are of value in the treatment of chronic alcoholism in that admission to hospital can be avoided and a sufficient interval of sobriety produced for the institution of the usual psycho-therapeutic approaches.

## The Use of Amphetamine (Benzedrine) Sulfate in Alcoholism with and without Psychosis

*N.Y. State Med. Jour.*, 40 : 247, Feb. 15, 1940

A series of over 100 cases of alcoholism with and without psychoses were treated with 'Benzedrine' Tablets (usual dose 20—30 mg.) and compared with a comparable series of consecutive control cases. The results were as follows :—

"In the acute alcoholic psychoses the length of time necessary for recovery was considerably diminished, frequently by half, and the number of recoveries was slightly increased. An aborting tendency of the therapy was cited in the shift of cases from the pathologic intoxication group to the without-psychosis classification.

"In the protracted alcoholic psychoses tending toward deterioration the results were of very little significance except in the Korsakow's group where a smaller number of cases required commitment after treatment with the drug. An aborting effect was observed in a shift of cases from the diagnosis of Korsakow's psychosis to the classification of delirium tremens.

"In the acute phases of alcoholic intoxication amphetamine sulfate has been most effective. Likewise the characteristic physiologic and psychologic after-effects of acute inebriation have been dissipated quickly by the drug.

"In the treatment of chronic alcoholic addiction with amphetamine sulfate our results have been uniformly unsatisfactory. However, the depression following continuous daily imbibing in these patients responds to the drug during an institutional regime.

"In alcoholic states complicating other mental illness, amphetamine sulfate at times may be of value in differentiating the states of depression due to alcohol alone, which are usually rapidly dissipated by the drug, from the states of alcoholic depression superimposed on and masking depression of psychogenic origin which do not respond as readily to the drug.

"Amphetamine sulfate is of value in the more acute phases of alcoholism with and without psychosis."

## Amphetamine (Benzedrine) Sulfate in the Treatment of Chronic Alcoholism and Depression Neuroses

*Medical Record*, 151 : 211, March 20, 1940

The author describes the improvement noted in four chronic alcoholics treated with 'Benzedrine' Tablets. As a precautionary measure an initial test dose of 2·5 mg. was given in each case to determine the degree of excitation produced by the drug. Thereafter the dose was 10 mg. twice daily, on arising and at noon. In one instance this was reduced to 5 mg. twice daily.

At the time of the report, general health, appetite and sleep had improved; gastro-intestinal disorders and depression had vanished; withdrawal symptoms were negligible; and the patients had abstained from alcoholic drinks for several months.

## Benzedrine in Treatment of Morphine Addiction

*Brit. Med. Jour.*, 2:628, Nov. 9, 1940

The writer has found 'Benzedrine' Tablets "an invaluable aid in combating that physical and mental inertia which is a common factor in all cases of drug addiction when recovering." As an illustrative case he mentions a schoolmaster of 45 who had been taking 10 gr. of morphine by injection daily for four years. This amount was gradually reduced and the usual protracted convalescence began, the chief symptoms being inability to concentrate and disinclination for exercise. A fortnight after complete withdrawal, 5 mg. of 'Benzedrine' was given twice daily on rising and at noon. Marked improvement occurred and the patient was easily induced to undertake light occupation and to exercise. On the fifth day, 10 mg. of 'Benzedrine' was given three times a day, but was reduced to 5 mg. because it interfered with sleep. After a fortnight the 'Benzedrine' was stopped for a week. Thereafter 10 mg. was administered twice daily for ten days, with an interval of seven days' rest, and it was finally discontinued at the end of two months. The author sums up:—

> "A remarkable feature of the case was the complete absence of physical and mental inertia. Further, there was no inclination for the patient to fall back on alcohol as a stimulant, a recourse which almost without exception leads to a relapse. The benzedrine did not produce insomnia, nor did it cause any loss of appetite. The quick return to physical well-being and mental alertness was most marked."

---


## 'BENZEDRINE' BRAND TABLETS

Each tablet contains 5 mg. β-aminoisopropylbenzene sulphate (amphetamine sulphate).

***MAIN INDICATIONS***

DEPRESSIVE and FATIGUE STATES — LOWERED MOOD and APATHY

POST-ENCEPHALITIC PARKINSONISM — NARCOLEPSY — SEA-SICKNESS

ALCOHOLISM — DYSMENORRHŒA

NOTE ON DOSAGE

It should be emphasized that dosage with 'Benzedrine' Brand Tablets varies considerably with the individual case. It is wise to begin treatment with a test dose of ½ to 1 tablet (2·5 to 5 mg.), and, if there is no effect, to increase the dosage progressively. The effects are usually apparent with the first few doses. Careful supervision during this test period is particularly advisable, and provides the best guide for subsequent administration.

MENLEY & JAMES LIMITED

123, COLDHARBOUR LANE, LONDON, S.E. 5.



WELLCOME INSTITUTE LIBRARY

Coll. welMOmec

Coll. pam

No. QV BT: ADA 102

1940

M54a